

Equity and Inclusion Task Force

Final Recommendations Report

Presented to the Sonoma Valley Unified School District - XXX 2018

DRAFT

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Letter From the Task Force Chairs

“The quest for racial awareness and antiracist teaching should propel us to push back on negative stereotypes, correct distortions, and remedy omissions in our behavior and curriculum that stem from racism. Most powerfully, it should inspire us to ensure that if some students of color doubt themselves, it is our job to make them believe they can grow their ability and teach them how to act effectively from that belief. In the process, we will have to work hard to convince ourselves, since we are all, without exception, tainted by traces of racism and belief in the bell curve of ability.” ~ Jon Saphier

Thank you to the School Board and Sonoma Valley Unified School District for taking this first necessary step in a process of self examination and reflection of our school system. As we aspire to be an educational system that is as diverse as our community and supportive of all we must first develop an accurate assessment of who we are today. As a result of over 20 months of in-depth research, study, public input and comprehensive analysis the Task Force has developed this report and recommendations for your consideration.

There are numerous stakeholders to thank who assisted the Task Force throughout our process: members of the community, board members, teachers, counselors, administrators and staff who generously gave their time and expertise to help create our report. However, it is the thoughts and opinions of our community upon which this report is based that give it value. The fact that so many would take their time in meetings, listening circles and through online surveys speaks of their commitment and passion for the issues and the desire to seek change.

Instrumental in our process has been the support of Maite Iturri and Laurie Salmas who hosted and facilitated our meetings at El Verano Elementary School. They provided a stable base for the dynamic and diverse Task Force.

To all the members of the Task Force, we cannot begin to express the gratitude they deserve. They came and gave to be involved with bringing about change. Some were there for part of the long, uncharted journey and some from the beginning to the end of this task.

Finally, it is evident from the findings of this Task Force there is much left to be done towards building equity and inclusion throughout the Sonoma Valley School District. It is our hope that this document and our work will serve as one important step along a path for meaningful change.

Dr. Nancy Dome and Thomas Edwards

Members

Original Task Force Members 2016



Mario Castillo, Judith Nona Talague, Laura Monterroso, Deirdre Sheerin, Mimi Sommers
Laurie Salmas, Celeste Winders, Thomas Edwards, Kathleen Randles, Missy Jackson, Chris Marcoux
Nancy Dome, Curran Reichert, Esmeralda Sanchez Moseley, Krista McAtee, Elizabeth Campos, Maite Iturri,
Liz Bauer Liscum

Missing from photo or joined in 2017: Dan Gustafson, Nicole Abaté Ducarroz, Lucy Bollinger, Jennifer
Saldana and Jennifer McClellan

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Introduction

The community not placing the same value to parent's jobs. It seems to me that our parents are not viewed with the same importance as a white parent. My parents would love to go to the red and white ball, but there's no way they can afford those tickets. Sonoma Valley High School student

Latino opinion is not taking under consideration. The candidates chosen for homecoming/prom, the events. They only play the music they like at dances. Students shared they would like to have a dance where they can play their music. They feel leadership students choose their own friends as candidates, don't actually consider votes, if they did there would be more Latino candidates. Sonoma Valley High School student

In November 2016, an initiative was initiated by former superintendent Louann Carlomagno. Principal Maite Iturri of El Verano Elementary School facilitated the Equity and Inclusion Task Force. The mission was to allow a conversation about equity and inclusion within Sonoma Valley Unified School District and within the greater Sonoma Valley community. This resulted in 18 months of research, community outreach, listening circles, and data analysis. The outcome is this document which includes recommendations for the Sonoma Valley Unified School District and the school board. Twenty-four members were selected through application process, and monthly task force meetings started in November 2016. Task force members were stakeholders from the community, school district employees and school board members.

The Task Force members gathered community feedback during three separate "listening circles." The listening circle offered an opportunity for members of the Sonoma Valley community to share their opinions regarding equity and inclusion within our school district. Attendees shared their perspectives on specific questions that were developed by the Task Force.

Another form of data collection occurred via surveys at individual school sites. Task Force members attended open houses at school sites and community evenings to gather as much parent input as possible. The survey was publicized in school newsletters with links to it via school websites as well. A total of 624 surveys were submitted. In addition 93 people participated in listening circles.

Surveys were conducted at Open Houses at Sassarini and Prestwood Schools. Listening Circles were conducted at El Verano School, First Congregational Church of Sonoma, La Luz Center and Sonoma Valley high School. Survey links were available to all Sonoma Valley Unified School District parents and community members. Students from Adele Harrison Middle School also participated in the survey.

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The Task Force developed a shared definition of equity as part our beginning work: *equity is defined as giving individual students what they need in order to achieve, when they need it.* This definition also includes students feeling included and having a sense of belonging to the school community. We used this definition as a driving force in developing survey questions and in pushing the work forward of the Task Force.

An inclusive educational environment should:

- Reflect the demographics of the population that it serves
- Aim for inclusive curriculum
- Recognize and address biases
- Practice communication and language that promotes inclusion of all students
- Consider differences in home environment and access to resources of all students
- Foster the identity, language, and culture of all learners

Recurrent Themes

This report contains the observations and recommendations of the Task Force that are based on the recurring themes and ideas that came from the data collection. The recommendations of the Task Force primarily focus on overarching ideas for the whole district in order to create continuity across the sites. Adults working in the district are responsible to meet the needs of all students within the district through a “Multi-Tiered System of Support” (MTSS). As a way of addressing MTSS, the Task Force sees the data, concerns, and recommendations presented here as one mechanism for creating the varying levels of support that we desire for all students.

An important theme of the data and recommendations is a need to achieve change in the relationships between the schools and the Sonoma community. The Task Force identified specific themes that include:

- Develop relationships amongst parents, the Sonoma community, and the schools
- Consider the social and emotional health needs of students
- Need for Staff Development
- Evaluation of district programs and practices through the lens of equity and inclusion
- Need for culturally relevant practices

The responses to the survey indicated concern regarding a perceived lack of inclusivity and equity in a number of established programs and practices.

- 49% of respondents reported seeing inequity in the district
- 32% reported seeing a lack of inclusion
- 30% reported experiencing discrimination
- 43% reported that there are SVUSD programs that need to be more inclusive.

The members of the Task Force know that keeping a focus on equity and inclusion within the district is a continuous process that must evolve over time as the needs of the students and the community change. The recommendations presented here are not exhaustive or fixed, and are not intended to be merely a checklist to go through and then be considered finished. In order to have a school district that truly values equity and inclusion of the entire community, the district must embrace a long-term commitment that supports each student’s unique needs.

Commented [3]: +lliscum@sonomaschools.org
Assigned to Liz Liscum

Evaluations of Practices and Programs

Summarized by Tom Edwards and Kathy Randles

Rationale (Feedback From the Survey)

The responses to the survey indicated a concern regarding a perceived lack of inclusion and equity in a number of established programs and practices.

- 49 % of respondents reported seeing inequity in the district
- 32% reported seeing a lack of inclusion
- 30% reported experiencing discrimination
- 43% reported that there are SVUSD programs that need to be more inclusive

Respondents specifically mentioned a lack of inclusiveness and equity in AP classes, extra-curricular activities, leadership programs, homework policies, SVHS Academy programs, school clubs, college support programs, the AHMS Multi-Age/Projects Program, Gifted and Talented Education (GATE), athletics, disciplinary processes, and the IEP process. There were multiple respondents who reported a lack of equity in the different programs offered between different schools. There was specific mention of enrichment programs being more available at schools located in an area of socio-economic privilege. There were a significant number of responses stating a lack of inclusion in many of the district's programs. This indicates an overwhelming concern regarding the programs and the need for their evaluation. Data is provided where it was available.

An inclusive educational environment should:

- Reflect the demographics of the population that it serves
- Aim for an inclusive curriculum
- Recognize and address biases
- Practice communication and language that promotes inclusion for all students
- Consider differences in home environment and access to resources for all students
- Foster the identity, language, and culture of all learners
- Incorporate ongoing evaluation of inclusivity by students and educators

An equitable educational environment should:

- Allow and promote access to all programs for all learners
- Promote success of all learners
- Regularly evaluate the access students have to all school programs

Overall Recommendations

This Task Force recommends an examination of the programs offered in the SVUSD to determine if they reflect the criteria that have been identified as promoting inclusion and equity in the district. Some specific programs will be addressed in this recommendation, but these recommendations do not address everything that was brought up in the survey results.

I. Homework Policies

Rationale

There has been much attention in recent years to the impact of homework in the educational system. Varying opinions regarding the efficacy of homework have been postulated; however, there has been no consistent research that has either confirmed or denied the benefits. The pendulum continues to swing back and forth between pro and anti-homework factions. What is apparent, however, is that schools and districts when developing homework policies do not always consider the issue of equity. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development has stated in a policy brief titled, “Ten Steps to Equity in Education,” that “Expecting homework to improve performance may threaten equity since some children do not have the parental support to bring results” (2008). Other educational literature has noted that, “Students whose parents are available and able to help with homework have a distinct advantage over those whose parents work in the evenings or are unable to help with homework because of language barriers or their own lack of educational opportunities” (Dumont et al., 2012). “When assigning homework, we must consider how to ensure that all students have equal opportunities for success since some children do not have the parental support needed to bring results” (Orr, 2014).

It has come to the attention of this task force that this issue of homework has been discussed by parents and educators across the district at various times regarding the impact of homework assignments on students. The local newspaper, the Sonoma Index Tribune, published an editorial recently (Dec. 4, 2017) in which the issue of excessive homework assigned to some students was viewed to be detrimental to their well-being. The Task Force has also been informed that the elementary, middle, and high school are working toward the development of their own homework policies. While independent functioning should be encouraged to some degree, this issue that is relevant to every student in the district warrants a district-wide approach. The district should examine how the varying demographics of our students impact their ability to fulfill the expectations of educators, and whether these expectations promote an equitable environment.

“With diversity among learners in our schools at levels that are higher than ever, many teachers continue to assign the same homework to all students in the class and continue to disproportionately fail students from lower-income households for not doing homework, in essence punishing them for lack of an adequate environment in which to do homework. At a time when demand for accountability has reached a new high in its intensity, research fails to prove that all that homework is worth all that trouble” (Vatterott, 2009). Vatterott notes a movement away from the predominant pro-homework policies of previous decades. She developed a thorough evaluation of past and current homework trends, along with recommendations, that warrants reading by anyone involved in evaluating or developing homework policy. In it she concludes that student grades should not be put in jeopardy by incomplete homework (p. 55).

Recommendations

- Evaluation of the homework requirements and expectations across the school district
- Evaluation of the impact of current homework practices on grades of students, along with identification of groups whose grades are impacted by the expectations of homework
- Develop programs to support parental involvement of impacted students
- Research current standards and best practices recommended for a diverse population
- Develop an empirically based policy across the district and all grades that addresses homework expectations
- Consider in-school alternatives to homework assignments

II. Advanced Placement (AP) Classes

2016-2017 Enrollment SVUSD	K-12 Enrollment	Enroll %	9-12 AP	% AP
Latino	2615	57%	151	40%
White	1670	37%	194	52%
Am In	18	0%	0	0%
Asian	78	2%	17	5%
Black	24	1%	4	1%
Low SES*	2690	59%	154	41%
Male	2252	49%	129	34%
Female	2312	51%	245	66%
TOTAL	4564		374	

*SES: socioeconomic status

Rationale

This table shows that the enrollment in AP classes is not representative of the population at the high school. Latino and low SES students are significantly underrepresented. This underrepresentation is reflected in the views of the students. One student stated, “Those classes are for the white kids.” There appears to be an overwhelming feeling of “not belonging” for non-white populations.

Recommendations

- A team should be formed to evaluate the current AP selection process, assess current curriculum as it relates to inclusion and equity, and develop strategies to promote a more diverse and inclusive population.
- The district is encouraged to research current best practices that promote inclusion and equity in AP enrollment
- Consider a curriculum of AP classes that promote interest in underrepresented students
- Encourage consideration of the AP classes to younger students to promote early interest.
- Providing AVID strategies for all students.

III. Special Education

Rationale

Parents of students placed in special education report issues of inequity. Specifically the parents report:

- Inequality in disciplinary practices, expressing the belief that special education students are held to higher and more closely observed standards.
- Legally required accommodations are not being provided.
- The rights of students in special education programs are not respected and understood by school staff.

- A significant sense of discouragement is felt by students and parents.
- All staff are not specifically trained to teach and manage special education students.
- Poor communication to parents about their basic rights (specifically less-involved, or less acculturated parents often are not aware of their right to bring an advocate to the IEP).

Recommendations

- The school district should review its legal responsibilities.
- The school district should appoint a qualified inclusive team to evaluate special education processes and procedures.
- Survey students and parents of students receiving special education to assess the level of understanding of the process and their rights, and whether appropriate services are being provided.

IV. Inequity Within and Between Schools

Rationale

This section addresses specifically the concerns that some programs are available only at some schools. There is concern that the socio-economic makeup of specific schools allows for a fuller extra-curricular experience than at others.

The Multi-Age/Projects Program at Adele Harrison Middle School was identified by respondents in regard to lack of inclusion and equity. This program places students in a program for their entire middle school experience in two of their core classes and places them with the same peer group for most of their experience for their middle school years. The perception is that this group of students is not diverse in regard to racial and socio-demographic make-up. If this is true, these students miss essential experiences of participating in a fuller diverse environment in the very core classes where cultural learning and development of attitude occurs; these students are excluded from an environment that reflects the world within which they live. The Multi-Age/Projects Program is designed to promote enriching experiences and creative thinking. Students in the dual-immersion track are excluded from this experience, as are students at Altimira Middle School.

Recommendations

- Review of programs and extracurricular activities offered across the district regarding equitable access and experiences.
- If programs are found to be inequitable, the district should develop a plan that not only allows, but promotes, access to all students.
- Evaluation of the Multi-Age/Projects Program in regard to its equity, selection process and demographics of those selected. If the population is found to be non-inclusive and not diverse, then the district should research best practices in regard to providing inclusive and equitable programs throughout the district.
- If programs such as the Multi-Age/Projects Based learning are found to be more beneficial to students, then the district should consider providing this learning experience to all students, rather than applying it selectively to a few, and making it an inclusive and equitable programs.
- Informing kindergarten families when they are enrolling their children into the K-8 Dual Immersion Spanish language program that they are self-selecting out of the Multi-Age/Projects Program; middle school students cannot be in both Dual Immersion and the Multi-Age/Projects Program.

V. Disciplinary Practices within the District

Rationale

The Task Force examined data regarding suspensions and expulsions. The statistics presented some disconcerting results.

	Enrollment	Suspensions	Expulsions
Latino	57%	62%	67%
White	38%	35%	27%
Low SES	58%	98%	100%

Each of these statistics represents a significant disproportionality between the populations represented and the populations suspended and expelled, with Latino populations over-represented, especially in the expelled category.

Equally disconcerting is the statistic regarding students of low socioeconomic status. Here as well, there appears to be a huge discrepancy of disciplinary practices for this group of students compared to the general enrollment population. This is an eye-opening finding that warrants further examination.

Recommendations

- This Task Force recommends that a team or task force be formed to fully examine the current disciplinary practices of suspensions and expulsions.
- The data presented in this document should be fully evaluated, along with an evaluation of the trends.
- There should be a full evaluation of what resources, education, support, and alternatives are available to all students and parents involved in disciplinary processes, along with examination of impediments to access of these resources for this **singularly represented class of SES students and parents, and the over-represented Latino students and parents.**
- The school district should develop a plan that addresses goals to bring these statistics more in line with the population that is represented.

VI. Restorative Justice Practices

Rationale

Recent best practice for discipline in schools has included a movement toward incorporating restorative justice practices. Restorative justice has been shown to be an effective alternative to punitive responses to wrongdoing. Inspired by indigenous traditions, it brings together persons harmed with persons responsible for harm in a safe and respectful space, promoting dialogue, accountability, and a stronger sense of community. (Davis, 2014).

Recommendations

The eight steps Fania Davis recommends include:

- Assess need
- Engage the school community
- Hire a restorative justice coordinator
- Begin Training
- Have school-wide implementation
- Institute restorative discipline
- Involve students in peer restorative practices

- Evaluate the program in an ongoing manner

The importance of addressing current disciplinary practices is underscored by the following issues:

- “Suspension and expulsion can influence a number of adverse outcomes across development, health, and education. Young students who are expelled or suspended are as much as 10 times more likely to dropout of high school, experience academic failure and grade retention, hold negative school attitudes, and face incarceration than those who are not” Healy (2014).
- Statistics show that suspended students are more likely to be arrested and to drop out of school.
- Restorative justice practices, such as the one utilized by the Los Angeles School District show significant decreases in suspensions. Specifically, the LAUSD posted a 92 percent decrease in the number of days lost to suspensions as a result of its restorative justice program.
- These statistics are especially relevant to this district that has a disproportionately high level of low SES students who are suspended and/or expelled.

This Task Force is aware of some past attempts by the district to implement restorative justice practices; however none of these attempts have resulted in across-the-board implementation of the practice. While there has been some training for staff, without full implementation of the practice that includes appropriate allocation of staff, policy development, and training, change has not occurred. Santa Rosa schools currently employ Accountability Circles for high risk students. There was a prior county task force that recommended that the restorative practices be expanded throughout the county and made available for all at students at risk for suspension or expulsion.

Additionally, the Oakland Unified School District has successfully implemented restorative practices with successful results, and OUSD could be a resource in examining how restorative practices would benefit our district. It is apparent that the disciplinary processes in this district have created an inequitable representation of some groups of students.

Recommendations

- Evaluate the cost and benefits of implementing a restorative justice practice in the district.
- If found to be the best approach to creating a more equitable disciplinary practice, develop a plan to provide the policy and resources necessary to implement restorative practices.
- This current Task Force supports the prior recommendation that the restorative justice program, now available through juvenile probation and in the Santa Rosa City Schools, be implemented in our district.

While this recommendation will require a significant financial commitment by the district, the ongoing cost of inequity and discrimination, both politically and legally, may take a greater financial toll in the future.

Resources

Davis, Fania. Restorative Justice Practices. Fania E. Davis, Co-Founder and Executive Director, Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth, Edutopia, the publication of the George Lucas Educational Foundation, in the September 26, 2014 edition, in an article titled “8 Steps for Schools Interested in Restorative Justice, “

Dumont, A., Trautwein, U., Ludkte, O., Neumann, M., Niggli, A., & Schnyder, I. (2012, January). Does parental homework involvement mediate the relationship between family background and educational outcomes? *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 37(1), 55–69.

Healy, Cheryl. (March 26, 2014) Discipline and Punishment: How School Suspensions Impact the Likelihood of Juvenile Arrest, Child & Family, Child and Family Juvenile Justice, Research in Brief. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2008). "Ten Steps to Equity in Education," OECD Policy Brief.

Orr, Jennifer,(July, 2014) The End of Homework. *ASCD Express*, Vol. 9, No. 21.
Suspended Progress: The Harms of Suspension & Expulsion Just Children Appendix A May 2016

Vatterott, Cathy (2009) Rethinking Homework. Best Practices that Support Diverse Needs. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Culturally Relevant Practices

Summarized by Elizabeth Campos and Lucy Bollinger

Laurie Olsen and California Tomorrow describe cultural competency in their work *Cultural Competency: What it is and Why it Matters* (2007). They identify cultural competency as a way of being not a check-off list.

Cultural competency is not a destination. The work of bridging cultures and creating responsive services is never “done.” Communities continue to change. Service providers continue to interact with new cultural groups. And as individuals, we continue to discover new layers of our own cultural assumptions. Because of this, the development of cultural competency may be best thought of not as arriving at a set of skills and knowledge, but rather as a journey and a way of being.

Rationale (Feedback From Survey)

The Equity and Inclusion Task Force implemented a survey to community and school members asking questions regarding issues of equity and inclusion in the district. These are the responses:

- See a lack of inclusion within SVUSD: 32% yes, 41% no, 27% unsure
- Experience discrimination in school: 31% yes, 59% no, 11% unsure
- SVUSD programs need to become more inclusive: 43% yes, 12% no, 42% unsure
- SVHS programs that are NOT inclusive (>30%): clubs, athletics, AP/Honors, SPED, College and Career Center
- Middle School programs that are NOT inclusive (>20%): clubs, sports, Safe School Ambassadors, Leadership, After School Program, Mentoring Program
- Elementary School programs that are NOT inclusive (>20%): After School Enrichment, PTO, After School Academic Support, GATE, Counseling Services, Mentoring Program

Data - CDE Data¹:

English Language Arts: In student subgroups, our English Learners, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, and Hispanic students report as “Declined and Low” and Students with Disabilities report as “Declined and Very Low”, while White and Asian students report as “Maintained High” and “Declined High” respectively.

Math: In student subgroups, our Socioeconomically Disadvantaged and Hispanic students report as “Declined and Low”, English Learners and Students with Disabilities report as “Declined and Very Low”, while White and Asian students report as “Maintained Medium”.

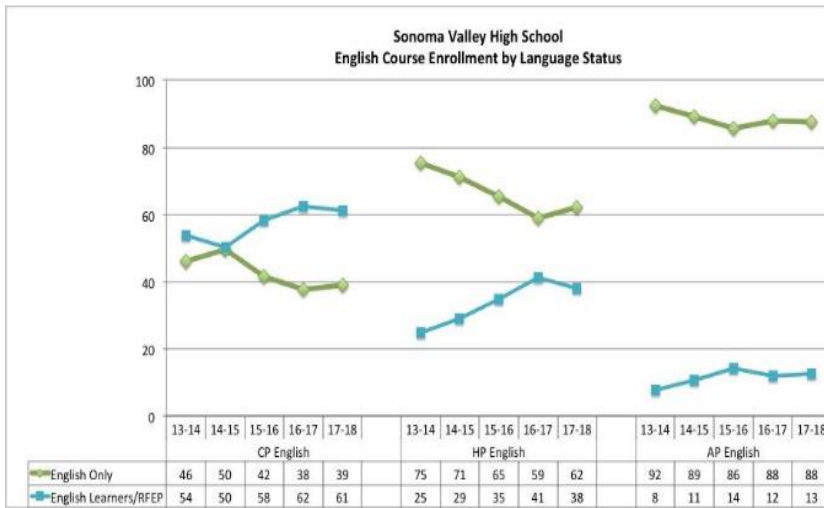
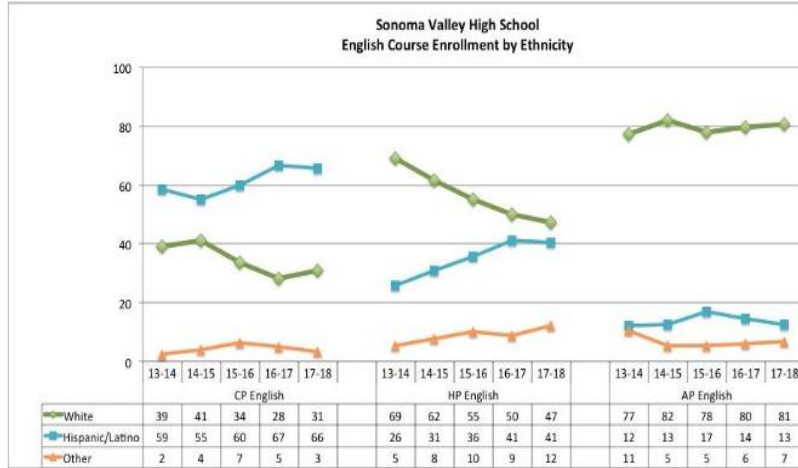
CDE Data²:

¹ <http://www6.cde.ca.gov/californiamodel/>; <https://www.caschooldashboard.org/>

² <http://www6.cde.ca.gov/californiamodel/>; <https://www.caschooldashboard.org/>

Topic	Results				
English Learner Progress (reported in Nov. 2017)	1 school declined significantly	2 declined	1 maintained,	1 increased	3 increased significantly
English Language Arts- Grades 3-8 (reported in Nov. 2017) shows that our district placement is “Declined and Low”	2 declined significantly low	2 declined low	2 maintained low	1 increased	
In Mathematics- Grades 3-8 (reported in Nov. 2017) shows that our district placement is “Declined and Low”,	1 declined significantly very low	1 declined low	4 maintained	1 increased	

- High School Courses and Club Historical Data³



³ <https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/142hNpoNE5kXIXJWZz8u1NjP6WZTfyksWForoEYP5Tvo/edit?usp=sharing>

- Historically underrepresented students continue to be underrepresented in AP classes at Sonoma High School.
- 2 Latino clubs are currently on Sonoma Valley High School campus.

Recommendations

The Task Force recommends that the district:

- Implements a more effective and wide reaching stakeholder survey to collect more student/family voices and data.
- Hire staff (classified and certificated) who represent the school community.
- Reviews current curriculum (including upcoming ELD/ELA curriculum adoption), ensuring greater representation of the community within authors, subjects, characters, et cetera.
- Investigates extending the Dual Immersion to be from Pre-K through 12th grade⁴.
- Ensures that the demographics in all courses match the demographics of the school, particularly in AP courses. A possible way to do this is to have department chairs present information to students and parents.
- Adopts social justice curriculum with professional learning.
- Has schools self-assess using the English Learners Roadmap Rubric to identify strengths and growth areas at site and district levels.
- Implements ongoing training. Examples of topics:
 - Students: Implicit Bias
 - Staff: Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, Implicit Bias
 - Families: Information about opportunities for involvement (for example, course selection, extracurriculars, parent committees, community organizations, et cetera)
- Supports outreach and inclusion of Latino families (and any other subgroups represented in our student population) in community organizations (for example, the Mentoring Alliance, Sonoma Valley Education Foundation, et cetera.)
- Ensures *all* students feel comfortable to sign up for clubs, extracurriculars, and school events and activities (for example, homecoming candidates and the Leadership class).
- Implements culturally relevant and inclusive field trips in all grades.

Themes From Survey

The survey showed concerns about:

- A need for authentic student voice
- Academic tracking of students (both in actual and perceived accessibility)
- Lack of communication around issues of race, culture, and inequity
- Limited choices (or uninformed choices) in courses and extracurriculars

Resources

- Student course(s):
-

⁴ <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B3rpLawbuwJUczBYbUN5M0NFdlNoRnBadm1MekhJeHB1RFBF/view?usp=sharing>

- <https://news.stanford.edu/2016/01/12/ethnic-studies-benefits-011216/>
- Student survey ideas:
 - TEN <https://www.10teaching.net/>
 - Tripod <http://tripoded.com/>
- Curriculum Pilot and Adoption:
 - [Culturally Relevant Practices overview ppt](#)
 - Rubric for ELL lense when looking at curriculum: <https://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/Centricity/Domain/4/Framework%20for%20Raising%20Expectations.pdf>
 - Visit SEAL schools: http://www.laurieolsen.com/uploads/2/5/4/9/25499564/seal- a_prek-3_model_final.pdf
 - “Chapter 9” of the *English Language Arts/ English Language Development Framework* from the CDE <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/rl/cf/documents/elaelfwchapter9.pdf>
- Social Justice Curriculum and Trainings:
 - www.epocheducation.com
 - [Epoch Education Social Justice Curriculum- Semester 1](#)
 - [Epoch Education Social Justice Curriculum- Semester 2](#)
 - <http://nationalequityproject.org/>
- Rubrics/Questions with Equity and Culturally Responsive Lens:
 - [EL Roadmap Rubric](#) based on the [EL Roadmap Overview](#)
 - [Using an Equity Lens](#) questions from National Equity Project
 - The National Center for Cultural Competency (NCCC) (<http://nccc.georgetown.edu/foundations/frameworks.html>) offers guiding principles and values for organizations to incorporate into their work.
- Zaretta Hammond’s book, *Culturally Responsive Teaching & the Brain: Promoting Authentic Engagement and Rigor Among Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students*

Staff Development

Summarized by Dr. Nancy Dome and Mimi Sommer

Rationale (Feedback From Survey)

The Equity and Inclusion Task Force administered a survey to community and school members asking questions regarding issues of equity and inclusion in the district:

- 49% of the respondents say they see inequity in SVUSD.
- 23% respondents say they are unsure.
- 28% said they do not see inequity in the SVUSD.

Regarding a lack of inclusion:

- 32% of the respondents say they see a lack of inclusion in the district.
- 27% say they are unsure.
- 41% responded that they do not see a lack of inclusion.

The anecdotal and statistical feedback strongly suggest that there is a lack of strong relationships between students and their families and the school staff community, which includes teachers and all other personnel on the campuses. These poorly established relationships lead to a lack of trust amongst the students and their families toward the school community and to poor communication amongst the groups.

Recommendations

The Task Force would like the district to survey and evaluate the different types of staff professional development that is currently happening at all school sites regarding equity and inclusion. The specific focus of equity and inclusion is inconsistent from site to site. Thus, a next step would be to survey teachers and administrators at each site to catalog what professional development has already been completed and implemented. Sites can then build on what already is happening, further expanding training based on specific site needs. The Task Force also recommends that decisions around professional development be data-driven to specifically address the inconsistencies across the district. Possible topics for professional development are included in this section. It is also recommended that each school focus on building internal capacity to sustain the work on each site and thus consider a trainer of trainer model to wean off the need for external supports.

Point of Concern

One consistent downfall to implementation of equity work in many districts has been a lack of follow-through and further development that is based on building on what has already been done in prior trainings. Genuine and lasting change has to be supported with ongoing training and resources to make the work sustainable and embedded in daily practice. Training specific to equity work has to be a focus rather than considered as an add-on to other professional development work. To this aim, the Task Force recommends that the district put in place a district-wide plan for professional development goals related to equity and inclusion. Sites should also create site-specific plans under the umbrella of the district-wide plan, and these plans should be created to make the work sustainable at all the school sites.

Relationship Themes from the Survey

The survey shows concerns about the relationships among the various constituents in the school community. Results show a lack of caring customer service. If the community felt an improvement in relationships across the district, this Task Force anticipates that families would feel more connected to the schools and that there would then be an increase in parent engagement. The school district needs to remember that the families are our clients, and thus we must seek to understand and provide support, even in difficult situations.

Diversity/Equity Themes From Survey

The survey shows concerns about communication between the special education and general education teachers, and respondents feel the lack of communication is detrimental to student achievement. There is also concern about the communication between the schools and the families of the students in special education, stating that information is not timely and that there is a lack of understanding about parental rights.

From the district's public data, there is an over-representation in discipline of students of color; furthermore, students with special education needs are disciplined at a higher rate as compared to the general education population. These factors, based on district data and feedback from the survey, call for specific attention being given discipline policies, with a closer look being given to the disproportionality of particular populations present in the data.

Finally, the district is being called on to create opportunities for ongoing learning around these topics and to use research-based information and practices to begin to embed equity and inclusion into daily practices.

Training Topics

The purpose of professional development regarding equity and inclusion would be to:

- Develop effective communication skills and strategies
- Create trust and transparency between the school and home
- Develop cultural sensitivity
- Build relationships and create inclusion for students, families, and the general Sonoma community

Based on the survey results mentioned, possible training topics include:

- Implicit bias
- Addressing microaggressions
- Roles and responsibilities regarding the special education and general education relationship
- Culturally relevant pedagogy
- Restorative practices
- Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support (PBIS) or equivalent
- [Adverse Childhood Effects \(ACES\)](#) and [Racing ACES](#)
- Trauma-informed care

Resources for Professional Development Training

- Culturally Responsive Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support (PBIS) or equivalent
- Specialist facilitators in the field, such as Epoch Education, Ashanti Branch, and Jeff Andrade Duncan
- Sonoma County Office of Education (SCOE):
 - Customized services are available through the Mosaic Group of Instructional Services
 - Monthly Publications: SCOE Connections for administrators, SCOE Learning Link for educators who opt-in
 - Lists of programs and classes: scoe.org/classes
 - More Details: <https://www.scoe.org/pub/htdocs/classroomresource.html>
 - In particular, SCOE does work on Restorative Practices

Summary Statement

Survey results are showing critical mistrust between some parts of the Sonoma community and the school district. A high percentage of the people surveyed reported a lack of inclusion as well as concerns about equity within the school district. Since there is no cohesive district-wide plan for helping staff understand issues around equity and inclusion, the Task Force recommends that the district develop such a plan and begin implementation as soon as possible. Student and parent voices must also be included, along with all SVUSD staff, as each group will bring a different perspective that help to build relationships and develop trust. The district can pull from the suggested resources or seek others to develop ongoing professional development initially for the faculty and staff of Sonoma Valley Unified School District and eventually include students and families as the district's capacity grows to facilitate these discussions.

The Social and Emotional Health of Students

Summarized by Maite Iturri and Jennifer Saldana

Rationale

Through the lens of equity and inclusion, the need for social, emotional and mental health services in Sonoma Valley Schools is apparent. Many students are exposed to traumatic events, violence, abuse, substance use and adult conversations and situations that are not appropriate for them to be exposed to. These conditions are the result of factors in a child's life and can have profound effects on a student's social and academic life. With the

recent increase nationally in gun violence on school campuses, there is greater urgency to deal with these concerns now more than ever.

The Equity and Inclusion Task Force is recommending support for social, emotional health services not as a direct result of the data collection, but from the framework of equity and inclusion. That is, students in emotional crisis are less mentally present in the classroom which impedes their learning, therefore mental health concerns about students become an issue of equity. Students often “act out” when they are in crisis. Teachers, school counselors, psychologists and administrators are fully aware of the needs within the schools and could provide professional insight into the urgent need for services.

This is an issue of inclusion and equity for students who are in need of and unable to access appropriate social and emotional services. In order for students to be fully functional in school, these needs to be addressed. Limited access to these kinds of supports are a direct result of limited resources, availability and the geographical location of Sonoma Valley.

Data

The need has been identified in two documents “*Portrait of Sonoma County*,” and the “*Sonoma County Health Needs Assessment*.”

According to the *Sonoma County Community Health Needs Assessment for 2013–2016*, the following recommendations were made regarding mental health:

Access to services related to substance use disorders. Treatment works. Early screening, intervention and appropriate treatment for harmful substance use and addictive behaviors is critical to intervening with teens, pregnant women and others who can benefit from treatment. Unfortunately, despite increasing levels of addiction, access to substance abuse treatment in Sonoma County is severely limited for low-income individuals without healthcare coverage. Insuring timely access to culturally competent substance abuse treatment, tailored to the specific needs of those seeking help, can break the cycle of addiction and benefit individuals, families, and the community.

Access to mental health services. Many mental health problems can be effectively treated and managed when there is early detection, early assessment, and when there are links to ongoing treatment and supports. In Sonoma County, however, many individuals with mental health concerns do not have access to the treatment they need based on income and their geographical location. Insufficient private insurance coverage for mental health services and insufficient availability of publicly-funded treatment services are significant barriers for many who seek mental health services and support. Lack of an integrated approach to mental health within the healthcare system can lead to missed opportunities for early problem identification and prevention.

Adverse childhood exposure to stress (ACES). “Adverse childhood experiences (ACES),” a variety of ongoing conditions or events that can be categorized as recurrent childhood trauma, have been documented to lead to health and social problems, risk-taking behaviors and a shortened lifespan for the adults who survive them. ACES have been linked to a range of adverse health outcomes in adulthood, including substance abuse, depression, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, and premature mortality. The prevalence of ACES underscores the need for additional efforts to reduce and prevent child maltreatment and associated family dysfunction and the need for further development and dissemination of trauma-focused services to treat stress-related health outcomes associated with ACES.

In addition, [Racing ACES](#) includes the effects of race and poverty on childhood trauma. Race, language and color are critical to the conversation on childhood trauma. Populations that have been traditionally oppressed add another layer of complexity to adverse childhood effects.

The ambivalence that fills the all too common absence of historical trauma and ongoing violence and harm aimed at people of color. This absence has an atmospheric effect that conveys and compounds harmful pathologies surrounding people of color in the midst of ongoing trauma.

Access to health care coverage. Ensuring access to affordable, quality health care services is important to protecting both individual and community health, eliminating health disparities and promoting overall quality of life in the community. The cost of both routine and emergency care for uninsured patients can be financially devastating. Individuals without health care insurance coverage may defer needed care, diagnostics and medicines for themselves and their families and may, as a result, experience higher rates of preventable illness, suffering, disability and mortality than those who have insurance. While a significant portion of Sonoma County's uninsured population will be eligible for more affordable health care coverage under healthcare reform, financial barriers may still exist for low-wage earners who are unable to meet premium requirements. And, undocumented individuals will continue to be in-eligible for publicly funded coverage, leaving many individuals and families vulnerable.

The New York Department of Education (<http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/Health/SBHC/MentalHealth.htm>) has identified the following rationale as to why school based counseling is needed:

Why Have Social Emotional Health Programs in Schools?

- Keeps issues from affecting emotional, academic, or physical development
- Provides relief from symptoms earlier rather than later
- Can prevent long-term problems
- Improves academic performance and personal relationships with family and friends

Recommendations

The Task Force recommends expanding current emotional and behavioral health services and mental health programs available to help students with social and emotional needs and effects of traumatic incidents. Families' circumstances also should be assessed and addressed. School counselors are trained to work with students, families, staff and agencies ensuring a holistic approach. In addition, partnerships with nonprofits in the area and county can provide the additional support for families.

This recommendation is a result of the Sonoma Valley Unified School Districts Equity and Inclusion Task Force interaction with Sonoma Valley parents, students and community members.

This proposal recommends that behavioral health counseling and mental health services be readily available to students and families (as needed). In addition, this proposal encourages the SVUSD to examine resources to provide on-going counseling for youth within Valley schools. This would require a commitment to offering additional services in SVUSD schools.

The need for access to mental health resources is echoed around the county, state and nation. The Portrait of Sonoma identifies that disparities in health and life expectancy among our populations are avoidable given that we place a priority on health access for all.

In some Sonoma County neighborhoods and among some groups, resources for health are plentiful, and their value is clearly evident in the people's health outcomes. For others, the social determinants of health that shape daily routines result in shorter, less healthy lives. **The good news, however, is where we started: extreme health disparities are largely preventable.** Collaborative efforts by government, schools, businesses, nonprofit organizations, and individuals themselves aimed at prevention offer a path to healthier, longer lives and fewer public health- care dollars spent on treating preventable illness (Portrait of Sonoma County, 2014).

Mental health services for the county's youth, particularly those who live in poverty, are limited. School counselors are often limited to helping with urgent care, Child Protective Services (CPS) reporting, and scheduling. Schools currently do not have the human or financial resources to offer ongoing counseling for students and families. In recent forums, mental health services and social emotional wellness for students was identified as a dominant need in our Valley.

The *National Association of School Psychologists* has identified the following components which should be included in school-based counseling:

- Consultation with school staff and/or parents regarding the social/emotional/behavioral needs of children and youth.
- Consultation with school staff regarding classroom and/or school-wide approaches to behavior and to develop positive behavior supports and interventions.
- Screening, evaluation, identification and referral for children exhibiting emotional disturbances.
- Planning and implementing appropriate academic and other educational supports.
- Conducting functional behavioral assessments and/or social skills instruction.
- Measuring progress and improvement both for individuals and also for programs.
- Interventions for students with chronic behavior and emotional needs.
- Small group and/or individual counseling for such issues as social skills, anger control, et cetera.
- Staff development on topics such as positive behavior supports and intervention, prevention of violence, crisis planning and intervention, et cetera.
- Resources and information to school staff and/or parents regarding characteristics, intervention, and treatment of disorders.

In addition, the Equity and Inclusion Task Force has identified the following as social emotional and mental health needs:

- District-wide social emotional learning curriculum
- Suicide prevention
- Mindfulness support in classrooms and schools
- Restorative practices
- Advisory for middle and high school students
- Culturally competent programming that supports and values our diverse population (see Village Nation or Jeff Duncan Andrade)
- Bullying and cyber-bullying

Coordination and referral of children and families to community service agencies, related to mental health needs. For more information on school-based mental health services and the role of school psychologists in

providing these services, visit www.nasponline.org. © 2006, National Association of School Psychologists, 4340 East West Highway, Suite 402, Bethesda, MD 20814, (301) 657-0270, www.nasponline.org.

There are national and local models that can serve as examples to Sonoma Valley to increase mental health services for youth and families. Humanidad Therapy and Education Services at Cook Middle School in Santa Rosa offers pro bono counseling and additional services on a sliding scale for families. These services are offered through Cook Middle School's Family Resource Center. El Verano Family Resource Center partners with local mental health professionals to offer additional services for families and students.

In addition, the New York Department of Education offers a model of services worthy of further investigation. (<http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/Health/SBHC/MentalHealth.htm>) has several models of service for school based mental health. These include:

- **On-Site Mental Health Programs** – offers individual treatment, groups, family counseling, and crisis interventions on school campus.
- **Mobile Response Team (MRT) Program** – offers assessments, consultations, classroom observations, crisis interventions, professional development for teachers, parent trainings, and referrals for treatment in the community.
- **STARS (Screening the At-Risk Student)** – implemented by nurses in middle schools. Offer suicide and depression screenings and referrals for further psychological assessments as needed. Not only are school nurses in scarce supply, but school counselors are better trained to provide this service in a holistic manner.
- **At Risk for High & Middle School Teacher Training** – Free web-based online training program aims to teach educators and others who work in both middle and high schools how to identify, approach, and refer students who show signs of psychological distress. <http://nyc.kognito.com>
- **Early Recognition and Screening Program** - Community mental health providers offer screenings school-wide for underlining emotional and behavioral issues. With parental consent, student can be referred for further assessment and offered treatment if indicated.
- **Presentations** – Presentations and trainings on a wide variety of emotional topics relevant to youth. Resources presentation for staff and families.
- **NYC TEEN Website** – this teen friendly website engages teens dealing with depression, drugs and violence, and encourages them to seek help. www.nyc.gov/Teen

Resources

All schools in Sonoma Valley could benefit from staff to support students, families and staff with ongoing counseling support and crisis counseling. An analysis of current services and allocation of resources should take place to determine program quality and staffing ratios.

Each campus should be staffed with the minimum amount of school counselors, 250 students to one counselor, according to current American School Counselor Association (ASCA) standards. Currently the district does not meet this recommended ratio. Students identified as having more severe mental health challenges should be referred to on-campus mental health providers at both elementary and secondary levels.

Performance indicator(s)

The metrics to determine success of a program that offers counseling to students in an ongoing manner or in a crisis situation can include: increased school attendance, lower drop-out rate, greater postsecondary matriculation, fewer suspensions and expulsions and greater parent participation in schools.

Parents and the Community

Summarized by Michelle Jackson and Laura Monterosso

Rationale

Research shows that family engagement, the collaboration between families and educators, accelerates student learning. Students do better in school and in life when their parents are engaged in their education. Family engagement contributes to a range of positive student outcomes, including improved student achievement, decreased disciplinary issues, and improved parent-child and teacher-child relationships (1).

Emerging evidence also suggests that family engagement can have important benefits for the inner-functioning of schools, including school staff having higher expectations for students, more shared ownership and trust across their faculty, and, ultimately, stronger school performance (2).

Transformation happens when teachers and support staff reach out to establish trust, build relationships, and partner with families to support academic progress. The most important roles parents play in their children's success are: setting high expectations, monitoring performance and holding children accountable, supporting learning at home, guiding children's education through college, and advocating for them. Creating a welcoming and engaging climate with strong relationships and communication between families and school staff, partnering with families to support student achievement, and investing families and community in school success are some of the ways schools can engage parents and support their role in fostering their student success. Caspe, M. & Lopez, W. (2006) state that regardless of a parent's circumstances, family engagement is

not a static enterprise - with the right interventions parents can change their behaviors in relationship to their child's education (3).

Data

Data collected from SVUSD stakeholders indicates a desire for parents to support their children and to connect to their school communities. Stakeholders reported a lack of opportunity to connect, participate, and engage. The data also demonstrates that many parents feel excluded, specifically in the following areas:

- Educational programs, leadership, electives, after-school enrichment/academy
- Lack of inclusiveness, and opportunities for all parents to participate in Parent Teacher Associations (PTA), school site councils, and after-school events
- Tracking of Latino students and not helping with college opportunities
- Discrimination against Latino traditions as exhibited by the high school's lack of support and resources
- A lack of opportunities for social engagement
- The challenge of language barriers
- A lack of equitable resources across campuses
- A lack of communication due to limited or no access to the internet and electronic communication outside of school
- Latino parents are tired of hearing about their children's low test scores without making support or resources available
- Lack of equal treatment, inclusiveness, and opportunities for their children to prepare for, access, and enroll in specialized classes and programs including, but not limited to: Advanced Placement (AP) classes, the Engineering Design and Technology Academy, the AgriTechnology Academy, clubs, athletics, College Application Accelerated Track (CAAT) Program, college support programs, and work-based learning programs.

Recommendations

- More informational meetings held in Spanish and English at multiple sites and at different times of the day to educate parents about student opportunities in regards to access to AP classes, programs, and extracurricular activities
 - Training Topic: Parent Education in understanding the educational system, available resources, and how to access opportunities
 - Resource: Parent engagement coordinator
- Staff development provided to all staff to challenge beliefs of who should have access
- To ensure members of each sites' English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC) governing board have an understanding of their rights, roles, and responsibilities
 - Training Topic: Parent empowerment and relationship-building at all parent forums with assistance from a facilitator to empower to promote buy-in through partnerships between parents and administrators in decision making
 - Resource: Family Resource Center on each elementary campus/Grant Funded
- Host inclusive celebrations for the purpose of creating opportunities for people of different ethnicities and backgrounds to share experiences and celebrate life
 - Training Topic: Staff Professional Development (PD) around multiculturalism
 - Resources : Principals, teachers, and support staff; James Bank Levels of Multiculturalism
- Provide venues throughout the community to increase opportunities for connections and socialization

- Resources: Family Resource Center on each elementary campus/Grant Funded; local community based organizations and nonprofit partners
- Implement a second language exchange program pairing Spanish and English parents interested in second language acquisition
 - Resource: Family Resource Center on each elementary campus/Grant Funded
- Parent access to school computer lab before and after school for K-5. Parents in 6-12 have access to their student's school chromebook which connects to wifi
 - Resource: Family Resource Center on each elementary campus/Grant Funded
- Administrator training on data presentation at public events to provide a complete picture rather than focusing on negative aspects
 - Resource: Professional Development and training
- Continue to provide translation services during meetings, conferences, Open House, Back-to-School night, Individualized Education Plans (IEP), and school-to-home communication
- Transparency in district budget and an explanation of different funding areas and resources
- Include families of color in decision making bodies like the PTA so parent-driven decision making and power is shared, fair, and balanced.
- Solution focused support for parents who have children with low test scores or who have academic, behavioral, or social challenges that deter from school success.
 - Resource: Family Resource Center on each elementary campus/Grant Funded

Training Topics

- Parent Education in understanding the educational system, available resources, and how to access opportunities
- Parent empowerment, and relationship building at all parent forums with assistance from a facilitator to empower to promote buy-in through partnerships between parents and administrators in decision making
- How to increase family advocacy and support on all campus

Resources

- Parent University - Grant Funded/Minimal cost to the district (provide classroom space and janitorial costs)
- Parent engagement coordinator
- Family Resource Center on each elementary campus/Grant Funded

Point of Concern

Some reported data identified and challenged district processes, methods of information sharing, and programs that are currently in place.

Citations⁵

⁵ Iowa Parent Information Resource Center;

<http://guide.swiftschools.org/sites/default/files/documents/2-3.pdf>;

Henderson, A. & Mapp, K. (2002). *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement*. Austin, TX: SEDL.;

Bryk, A. S., & Schneider, B. (2002). *Trust in schools: A core resource for improvement*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation; *Improving Family Engagement* (2018) Retrieved from <https://Flamboyanfoundation.org>

Appendix A

Circle Questions

1. Do you feel respected and comfortable in your school setting? Can you please explain?
2. Do you feel included or excluded in our Sonoma Schools and Community? Please explain?
3. What are the challenges and success regarding equity in our schools?
4. Is there anything else you would like to share about Equity and Inclusion? If so what?

**Task Force on Equity and Inclusion
Sonoma Valley School District
December 14, 2016 & January 11, 2017**

Norms: each perspective is welcome, you have 2 minutes per question, please give the speaker your full attention, what you say here stays here.

Why you are here (pitch): You are here to help us be a better organization and community. We want to address issues of equity and inclusion within our schools.

AGENDA FOR THE CIRCLE OF CONVERSATION

Introductions: Ask each person to introduce themselves. Thank them for coming.

Share why you invited them and what you are working on.

Who would like to start?

Questions for the group meeting discussion:

What are you concerned about at school?

What are the problems you see in the community that impact the school

What do you see in our community that makes you upset and violates an important value you have?

You can ask people to expand on their answers with questions like these: “why?” “what did you do about it?”, “what do you want to see happen?”, “who else cares about this?”, “are you willing to do something about it if you had others working with you?”, “can we follow-up with you?”

The recorder uses a poster paper and records responses in short summary form

Thank the group for coming, let them that we are recording their ideas and that they welcome to attend task force meetings. We will be researching their ideas and developing recommendations for the school board based on what we have been hearing and our research.

Appendix B

Equity & Inclusion Survey Questions

Thank you for taking the time to complete this short survey. Your answers will help the task force identify issues and develop possible solutions. We appreciate your participation. All answers are confidential and you may remain anonymous if you choose. Thank you!

Equity- Giving individual students what they need to achieve when they need it

Inequity - Unfairness, favoritism or bias.

Inclusion - Being included and feeling of belonging.

Lack of Inclusion - feeling left out or unwelcomed.

Demographics:

I am taking this survey as a: (check one. Survey may be taken again answering in another role)

Parent Student Educator Community Member Other

My school connections are:

- Dunbar Elementary
- Flowery Elementary
- El Verano Elementary
- Sassarini Elementary
- Prestwood Elementary
- Sonoma Charter School
- Woodland Star Charter School
- Altimira Middle School
- Adele Harrison Middle School
- Sonoma Valley High School
- Creekside High School

I identify as: (if more than one apply choose more than one option)

- Caucasian Latino African American Native American Asian/Pacific Islander
- Other _____ LGBTQIA

Annual Income:

- \$25,000 per year and under
- \$25-50,000 per year
- \$50 -\$75,000 per year

- \$75 -100k per year
- Over \$100,000 per year

I reside:

- Within the Sonoma City Limits
- Schellville
- The Springs (Fetters, Boyes, Agua Caliente)
- El Verano
- Glen Ellen

Survey Questions:

1.) Do you see inequity in Sonoma Valley Unified School District?

- Yes No Unsure

If yes explain:

2.) Do you see lack of inclusion in Sonoma Valley Unified School District?

- Yes No Unsure

Explain:

3.) Have you or a member of your family experienced discrimination in school?

- Yes No Not Sure

Please explain your experience.

4.) Do you or your student feel excluded in any way in school or school related activities?

Yes No Not Sure

Please explain:

5.) Are there SVUSD programs that need to become more inclusive?

Yes No Not Sure

List of programs. If you answered yes to Question 5, please choose any/all that you feel are NOT inclusive or need to be more inclusive.

Sonoma Valley High School:

Agriculture/Engineering Academy

Clubs

Leadership

Athletics

AP/Honors courses

Special Education

ELD(English Language Development)

AVID

Freshman Teams(Mauna Kea, Fuji, Olympus)

CAAT Program(College Application Accelerated Track)

College Support Programs (10,000 Degrees, Academic Talent Search, Students Rising Above)

- College and Career Center
- Work-Based Learning Program
- PLUS(Peer Leaders Uniting Students)

Middle Schools (Altimira and Adele Harrison):

- Intramurals
- Clubs
- Sports
- Safe School Ambassadors
- Leadership
- AVID
- Electives
- GATE
- After School Programs
- Counseling
- Mentoring
- PTO
- ELAC
- School Wide events

- Rallies/Assemblies

Elementary Schools:

- After School Enrichment Programs
 - After School Academic Support
 - PTO
 - ELAC
 - GATE
 - ASES - Boys & Girls Club After School Program
 - School wide events like Jogathon, Halloween Carnival, etc
 - Counseling Services
 - Mentoring Program
 - School Site Council
- 6.) Is there anything else you would like to share or other information you feel is important?

Thank you for your time and sharing your experience.

Appendix C

[Version 1 Survey Results](#)

[Version 2 Survey Results](#)

[Data sorted by theme](#)

Dragones Latinos

3/4/2017

Barking Dog Café

Students present: 7

Think Task: Opinions

1. What are your concerns about at school?

Concerns: 20% of latinos are completing A-G when we have 52% of the school population is latino

Several Latinas are becoming pregnant

Few latino students in honors or AP classes; the few that are in those classes are concerned to speak. They are afraid that their opinions are not valued as well as non-latino's input.

In most classes non-latinos are the ones that speak out/give input in class.

Self-doubt one of the reasons latinos do not participate in class.

Concern with peer judgment

Teachers make a difference: Students shared: "most teachers may not understand my point because of my background." Students say that they do feel much more comfortable approaching a teacher/counselor who is Latino/a

Feeling of exclusion:

Field Trips: 11th grade English classes took a field trip to Jack Landon, 11th graders in ELD did not get to go. Made them feel excluded and not part of the junior class.

A student who is still an English learner shared he usually sits with another English learner in his Eng 2 class and they don't interact much with others, there was a sub one day that kept telling him to do things and other students stood up for him. Shared it made him feel welcome and it was the first time he really felt part of the whole class.

There is a separation between Latino students: The new-comers and English Learners often don't interact with other students and don't participate in any extracurriculars. A student who is an English Learner and hangs out with these guys shared many of his friends don't feel comfortable going to clubs or reaching out to other students. That's why they always just hang out with each other.

Clubs: lack of knowledge about how to join

Lack of unity: leaders of clubs have club members who are predominantly their friends as participants of their club, makes others feel uncomfortable joining. Several students shared they tried other clubs but stopped going because they felt unwelcomed.

Separation of clubs - white students don't try to join Dragones Latinos or Sociedad Honoraria.

Leadership: Latino opinion is not taken under consideration. The candidates chosen for homecoming/prom, the events. They only play the music they like at dances. Students shared they would like to have a dance where they can play their music. They feel leadership students choose their own friends as candidates, don't actually consider votes, if they did there would be more Latino candidates.

Yearbook: Mostly white students, many Latino students don't bother buying it because they and their friends are barely included.

Sports: on teams that are few Latinos there is a feeling of awkwardness (every team except soccer), Latino players play less time. Many students on the team play club sports, while some students can't afford that, therefore they feel they don't measure up.

Perhaps the discrepancy is non-intentional, but there is a lack of equity

2. What problems do you see in the community that impacts the school?

The community not placing the same value on parents' jobs. "It seems to me that our parents are not viewed with the same importance as 'a white parent'". My parents would love to go to the red and white ball, but there's no way they can afford those tickets.

Lack of knowledge in the community about students' responsibility at home. We have to work, we have to help out at home, it's not our fault we can't dedicate all of our time to homework and studying like other students can.

Assumptions according to where you live (east/west side of town).

Questioning when you receive an awards as to: “Why did you get it?” There is an expectation that we are second best”

Rotary Club: should be promoted a lot more for supporting latinos. This association offers scholarships, etc., but many latino students don’t know

Teen Center: They tend to assume that you attend because you have been in trouble and are doing community service hours, I go because I like going and helping out.

Prom: Expensive, most candidates are non-latinos. A lot of us really can’t afford it. We should have an event that is less costly.

3. What do you see in the community or school that makes you upset?

Dress Code

More attention to Latinos breaking the dress code; there are students (non_latino) who do not get “dress coded”. Both for colors and wearing “revealing” clothes. Students shared multiple examples of latinos getting in trouble while nobody said anything to white students. Think this is the reason that 44 latinos got in-school suspensions last year for defiance vs 16 white students, it’s not fair.

If a teacher or staff member is being unfair you get in trouble for standing up for yourself or others.

Latinos being pulled out of classes are always assumed (by peers and teachers) that they are getting pulled out because they are in trouble.

Teachers and staff judge latino’s for assuming that you’re always getting in trouble

Non-latinos can speak disrespectfully to teachers and teachers do very little; however, latino students use at worse a sarcastic tone and they get sent out immediately.

Admin should take actions for incidents of bullying a lot more seriously. They just take your statement and don’t bother following up to see how you are doing.

Parents keep students from trying new things. A student wanted to try-out for the football team and his dad told him not to because that’s a white sport.

Moving forward:

- Try to get more new-comers to come to our meetings, we want them to feel welcome and to participate.
- Organize a 5 de Mayo event at school so our culture can be celebrated and appreciated too.
- Look into hosting a dance, where Spanish music and music we actually like is played.
- Get a DJ and live music for Raza Grad

Focus Group EV Parents

03/09/2017

Attendance 16

1) Do you feel comfortable and/or respected in your school environment?

-Personal experience and visually saw when another child pushed her son. Multiple times her child has been physically touched/hurt. The parent told the child that they needed to go talk to a school employee. The school employee got upset with the parent and told them they can't be calling the attention of another student that isn't theirs. Parent says she has reported the incidents before to the yard/cafeteria staff they have done nothing. Upset because the staff isn't doing their job and all they do is chat during their work time. Has taken pictures of what is happening. Parent feels that the staff feels superior because they have legal status and employment on campus.

-Parents asking if it's allowed for them to accompany their child to the restroom during school hours. They have entered the restroom before and they have been told in a harsh/exaggerated way that they can't enter. They don't feel comfortable entering the restroom in the staff room or office. Also don't want think its right the bathroom is being used afterschool during Parent University for health reasons for their children. They would feel better if there was a public restroom for the parents/volunteers. It would be helpful if they also understood the school hour rules.

-Feel it's not fair that working staff children have priority or special treatment. Moving another student from a seat during lunch so their child can sit there instead.

2) Do you feel included in your school or community?

-Would like to know how public school funds are being divided and used in the schools. She feels that if she didn't participate in ELAC or actively involved in school she would never know what's happening. She says other parents due to work may not be able to attend those meetings so how can we include them?

-A survey was sent home through the district and only 40 sent back. Parents also feel other parents need to be responsible to ask questions to understand what the survey is. Suggestion is to have a verbal survey and/or have the wording adjusted to better understand. In person survey outreach vs. being sent home.

-Not enough volunteer in class opportunities for older grades because they might not understand the material, the children are more independent and parents feel embarrassed even approaching the teacher to see if they need help because of the language barrier.

-The district had a student transferred to a school in Rohnert Park without her permission or including her in the decision.

3) What are the obstacles?

- Would like opportunities that would make them feel more inclusive because some teachers aren't as welcoming and/or culturally sensitive

-Not having enough time, taking care of the other children, and work schedule. Learning to balance is key but sometimes work won't let parent's take the time off and/or they have to choose between participating in school or taking care of other responsibilities.

-Not being included or informed when IEP services start for your child with disabilities

-They think there is a difference between parents of public schools to private schools because of the economic difference and the resources they have access too (nannies, housecleaner, cook etc.)

-Why do the teachers not take into consideration parent's work schedules for scheduling conferences and/or other teacher meetings? They need to be more flexible and give OPTIONS for parents to be able to meet

-When students go on field trips and when suggested to take money for spending some don't have the funds to take and it EXCLUDES those that don't have. There needs to be some funds that the teachers carry in case some forgot their money or couldn't take any.

4) What suggestions or comments would you like to add regarding Equity and Inclusion in the schools/community?

-Movie night with food bringing the school as a family/community

-A FRC in all schools

-Teachers/Staff need to learn what resources are available so they are able to refer families from other schools to existing services like the FRC/Parent University

-Find funding for extra support/tutoring for students for families that can't afford it as the more economically advantage families can

-Parents need to stop relying 100% on the school to take the responsibility to find all the resources for example if you know your going to need a interpret bring one, if you know your child is struggling reach out to the office right away don't wait until the school or conference meeting to be informed

-Prevention resources for parents

-Information workshops for parents to understand the importance in being involved

**Listening Circle
Community Meeting – January 31, 2017**

1. Are you respected and comfortable in your school setting?

Group 1

Elementary Schools – levels of communication at different age groups

Don't know where to go if uncomfortable

Yes, comfortable on site

Sonoma Charter – yes, comfortable/respected

Teacher seems uncomfortable with non-traditional approaches

Younger kids acting like middle schoolers

Covers all social strata

Teacher: I do feel respected and comfortable. Dual Immersion – there was a time I did not feel comfortable/respected due to admin
Awarded, then felt very welcome and supported
Want parents to talk directly more
Very vocal parents need to have different approach
My outreach helps to bridge communication
Would be great to have home visits – get to know the person better – teacher have allocated hours to visit homes
The liaison person sometimes doesn't tell us stuff
El Verano volunteer: very welcome
Adversarial attitude is common "I have to be the advocate"
Not conversational
Parent: yes, respected
Parent: I observe disconnect with teachers
Parent: I send an email and don't get a response or ask for a note
Communication with parents/includes counselors POWER SCHOOLS
If no response parent becomes "nagger"
Need better ways to connect and engage with teacher

Group 2

Economic disparity
Social pressure in relation to peer
Weighs on kids
As a parent in school district feels personally respected
Parents have a hard time navigating through system, esp. for parents with "difficult" students (Eg.RSP)
Students/families – money gets you better services
(dis)comfort level navigating system
Separated at first, then funneled together at HS
Not having the right support for students w/mental health issues
NAMI not working our schools now

Group 3

Flowery – wonderful
Concerned with division of town – (need) more interaction
SVHS
Struggled with math students
Experience with service trips
Student tracking is discrimination
Low level groups (academic) on track for the rest of 6th grade year on track whole time
Conversation with different tracked students – unaware of other experiences
Daily life completely different
What are variables for tracking?
5th grade teachers identify students struggling
EL proficiency a guiding force?

How do you learn English and content area at same time and not fall into a lower track?

Newcomers new to language

Language acquisition

How do we support newcomers?

Two Sonoma's – East and West, Anglo and Latino

How do we integrate w/o being patronizing schools a place for this to happen

Power at School/Powerless at School

Counselor = power at school

Feel respected

Privilege

Families feel comfortable

People may not feel comfortable at SVHS compared to Altimira - circumstances that deter students from achieving academic success

Frustrations at lack of support, SED(underserved community) at disadvantage

Parents of newer immigrants

Different ethnic students – too much drama

Social media – roll plays

Group 4

SVHS Students: Very much

Teacher (+) respect pledge – parent pleased

Concerned about a teacher who called a student “stupid”

Student: (need?) more mutual respect

Concern about separatism on the courtyard – students in group agree but don't feel it's a bad thing or an issue

Mentor: it's good

Student: it's who some of your friends with in elementary

Student: feels comfortable with Spanish speaking (peers)

Group 5

Included by choice, also a choice not everyone has

Opportunity (for inclusion) is different for different families/individuals

Lower classes Mexican-American younger esp. Identify – older identify with higher class Anglos (?)

Believe schools is comm.-comm. Is school. Does anyone purposely get excluded?

Volunteering by choice, inclusive – some may not get involved because of other obstacles

Parent view easy to be involved in child's elementary by volunteering as they get older not many opportunities.

Suggest having opportunities in middle and HS

Community connectors like Elders Salon matched with student

How do you get included if a student not in sports or in a club (shy)

Find a space for those middle students and their interests

Make non-traditional groups/resources for those kids

More diversity at schools and events

More guidance for teachers on sensitive topic

2. Are you included or excluded in our Sonoma Schools and Community?

Group 1

Yes – SR Project engagement was wonderful – great to open it up
(Are there) other ways to engage?
Teacher: yes – disconnect SD to community would like to attend community events, but can't afford it – would like to go and be a part of. Cost prohibitive
Even as a participant, can't go to the event
More partnering with community organizations Huge Latino community, but don't even see them here – what is appealing to the Latino community to encourage engagement?
Inclusiveness – been here two years feel included – involved in different pockets of community
Disconnected: Almost two different communities
Culturally, retirees
Springs/Square
What's the best way to communicate? Who reads the paper?
Groups online – mom's blogs
Share ownership of the group
Next Door must be multi pronged
Family Nights – involvement in family traditions
Sonoma Museum activities were great – Now La Luz does it, but splintered
Consistent events would be good
Don't even know who to call (when having an issue?)
Believe Sonoma Valley does really care
Creating opportunities to engage
More collaboration

Group 2

personally included, purposefully involves himself/herself
if you don't have the means to get involved, it's hard to feel included...which can build lack of equity
parents got themselves involved...which helped her get involved
parent engagement component very important - it's there, but more is needed
cultural difference between here and Mexico about expectations of parent involvement
lacks means re: how to get involved due to other commitments – suspects many feel similarly
parent education needed to help parents/students SELF ADVOCATE – may lead to change in perception of inequity
Do you get more (special treatment) if your parents are involved?
How can school district help parents be included if they can't come to school?
Economic lack prevents parent involvement E.G. Parents can't always come during day – parents feel judged/guilty

Group 3

Students 1.0 or 1.2 can't participate in sports – sports a motivating factor more than graduation
Film class – no Latino representation
Discussing club rush – camera never shared, film time went to popular (students), sports
2nd group /club not represented in students media presentations
Used to have Spanish segment

No minority/Latinos in (film?) class – why are Latinos not in the class?
Students (need to) feel more Latino leadership – need constant remind
Important – Latino staff members
News/media displays 1 side work together
Soccer – (only) 1 article and the team is doing great
Survey – portrait of Sonoma Valley
EV: Academically low and SED is high
Charter: Academically high and SED low
Opportunity gap – more effort early on – being able to identify students that are split off and given up on
Preschool – more inclusion
Can't blame parents – terrible inequity right out of the gate
Boys and Girls Club/Mentor Alliance – best place to reach that population
Achievement gap deficit model – change the framework
2nd and 3rd grade broken into low and high groups – how do we get away from
Shift away from deficit
SVHS
DI – honoring Spanish at SVHS
No heritage Spanish
No options for Spanish in the DI program
Latino kids – not just as role models for Spanish
How can we get stats on Latino students failing Spanish?
Elementary school – structure of EL development so they don't lose (their language?). We aren't teaching them to read and write in Spanish may lead to deficit when at SVHS in language course

Group 4

Parent: Some hard lines – culture and language – and there are lines
Students: feels apart of community, not excluded
Counselor: works with special Ed – kids included, some more than others, may be related to age
Counselor: maybe related to economic and language, the intros are difficult to start
Parent: special Ed student not included in school, there is separatism

Group 5

The more you are involved you build strong relationships with school/district staff
In HS had a voice/opinion not sure if it was heard but felt comfortable even now feel okay starting a dialogue
Depends on who you talk to, how is that person receptive to your need or questions
Look at each situation differently look into it, listen/explain
Stop rule following for the sake of rule following
Student advocate all through middle – HS
Homework is not equitable – some students/parents don't have the resources
Consistent campus advocate for family
Parent education

3. What are the challenges and successes regarding equity in our schools?

Group 1

Lots of kids left to fend for themselves
Want to see every kid valued...not so
Some kids say they don't have enough 1:1 – could be teacher – goes straight to special ed
What is the core issue
Wide diversity – teachers feel overwhelmed, burned out
Success – strong women/girls
One side of square won't send someone to other side of square
Wide diversity w/o infrastructure
Folks don't talk about the racism/diversity in a connected way
Geographical separation – one side of square vs. other side of square
Elementary – grouped, feel good together then to junior high separation starts
Separation not so much language
More activities to have time together
Healthy kids survey 15/16
Jr. High – no after school activities other than some sports
Allowing self-selecting groups sometimes doesn't work
Challenges
Nutrition disparity
Gardens in the schools
Our themes (Group 1)
Bridge between community and school not strong
One side of square vs other side
Communication and awareness re: events – inclusion/affordability

Group 2

Gender identity forum was awesome at beginning of school year
Tonight is awesome
True equity will never be truly achieved - equal access no matter demographics, gender, zip code Eg: students who have to care for siblings and/or household after school, traumatic factors
Field trips, experiences for students supported
Strive still, we should go even more
People/organizations needed to connect to parents – elected officials need to be present and involved
Need right people in the elected positions in the school district
Equity is...focusing most of the resources on the most vulnerable, those lacking
As a child had to work but had a very supportive counselor
Success: a lot of resource
Counselor/admin/teacher working together to help students and families
More mental health training for staff and teachers

Group 3

Flowery model = success
What extent is Latino culture taught at SVUSD?
Culture vs. Ethnic studies

Changing narratives – Sonoma liberal enough, would be very powerful narrative

Teachers

- willing to try new...
- work with families
- do anything for kids
- elementary hold them tight

6 – 12 little less involvement

Advisory model at Adele (ask Liz)

SVHS Teams

Link crew for someone old enough

SVHS Advisory once a week

30% achievement gap

Certain teachers (A-G)

Spreading to discipline

3x more suspensions for Latino students: some teachers wondered if repeat incidents

Same numbers in other cultural groups?

Top 40% only Latinos

Group 4

Parent: child currently 27 – “goth” in high school, didn’t go well. Doing well now could have had better admin support

didn’t help himself

may have been parenting

Student: feels teachers “slip” not fair

Student: lots of clubs, feel supported by clubs

Student: More diverse clubs but not all

Set up from beginning to be inequitable and system starts as early as Kinder

(Need to)Set up equity at early and every stage

Teach teachers to not just teach

Need more diverse teachers

Group 5

Navigating in schools – who, what

Empowering the student to build a relationship through open communication with their teacher – skills they can take with them into adulthood

4. Is there anything else you would like to share about Equity and Inclusion?

Group 2

More district staff dedicated to engagement with families who feel disconnected

Group 3

What can we do besides RSP

Smaller groups are they getting same experience at GE class – how do we make sure they are
Is separate setting the best?
Social structure within cultural group – aware of inequity

Group 4

(+) classes to parents to “better role model homework, sports, get kids involved
Teachers motivate and encourage students
Need places where parents can go to get advice NOT w/teachers or admin
ELAC and PTO – make them work together, start early
Generational differences
Starting language Spanish early/mandatory – any language builds community
El Verano (+) builds community